SWAMI RAMANAND TEERTH MARATHWADA UNIVERSITY,NANDED

Synopsis for the proposed Ph.D.Thesis entitled

Themes and Techniques in the Novels of Vikas Swarup: A Critical Study

For the Award of Ph.D. in English

Under the faculty of Humanities and Social Science

Researcher

Mr.Hadoltikar Vaibhav Sunil

A/P.Hadolti

Tq.Ahmedpur, Dist.Latur(MS) – 413515

Mob.No. 7507544672

Email: vaibhavshadoltikar@gmail.com

Research Supervisor

Dr. Mahesh M. Nivargi

Professor, Department of English,

Mahatma Gandhi Mahavidyalaya,

Ahmedpur, Dist. Latur (MS) – 413515

Research Centre

Department of English

Mahatma Gandhi Mahavidyalaya, Ahmedpur,

Dist. Latur (MS) – 413515

September, 2022

Title: Themes and Techniques in the Novels of Vikas Swarup: A Critical Study

The Tradition of novel in India

Indian literature has a tradition of texts produced in a variety of languages over thousands of years:Sanskrit, Prakrit, Pali, Bengali, Bihari, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Oriya, Punj abi, Rajasthani, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Lahnda, Siraiki, and Sindhi. After the British contact, literary texts started being published in English also. The tradition of Indian novels is ancient. The first well known novelist was Bāṇabhaṭṭa , a 7th-century Sanskrit prose writer and poet of India. He was the *Asthana Kavi* in the court of King Harsha Vardhana, who reigned c. 606–647 CE in north India first from Sthanvishvara (Thanesar), and later Kannauj. Bāna's principal works include a biography of Harsha, the *Harshacharita* (Deeds of Harsha), and one of the world's earliest novels, *Kadambari*. Bāṇa died before finishing the novel and it was completed by his son Bhūṣaṇabhaṭṭa. Both these works are noted texts of Sanskrit literature. The other works attributed to him are the *Caṇḍikāśataka* and a drama, the *Pārvatīpariṇaya*. Banabhatta gets an applause as "banochhistam jagatsarvam" meaning Bana has described everything in this world and nothing is left. Another significant Indian novel is entitled *Dashakumaracharita* , a prose romance in Sanskrit, attributed to Dandin . The writer is believed to have flourished in the seventh to eighth centuries CE. However, there is some obscurity surrounding its textual tradition, the identity of the author and the date of composition:The term *Indian literature* is used here to refer to literature produced across the Indian subcontinent prior to the creation of the Republic of India in 1947 and within the Republic of India after 1947.

The Indian English Novel

Indian novels began to be first written in Sanskrit only, with the said literary body being divided into - Vedic Sanskrit, Epic Sanskrit and Classical Sanskrit literatures. Setting apart the first two ages with their distinctive genres, it was precisely in the Classical Sanskrit age that the plan and notion of `novels` began to be first shelled out in India, lending a solid shape to the still-now floating criterion. The Classical age in

Sanskrit literature was the time when fables and fictional novels were begun to be given a distinct shape for the common mass. As such, beginning from that period and still going on in the current scenario, Indian novels have time and again impressed upon the reading public as well as fetching esteemed and honoured accolades both the country and overseas. Indian novels have been unbeaten enough to exhaustively reflect the history, society, political domain, economic status and tradition of Indian subcontinent, traversing ages. But the Indian English novel did not have its beginnings in the thirties of the twentieth century. English education was introduced in India in early nineteenth century. It is reasonable to expect that essays and articles and sketches would have hewn to flow from Indian pens soon after, especially with the establishment of English journals and newspapers. With the English presence in India from even earlier, it should be expected that some Indians wrote in English even earlier than that. All this should lead almost naturally to fiction in English - short as well as long. When we think of the early Indian English novel, we think of the trinity - Mulk Raj Anand (b. 1905), R.K. Narayan (b. 1906), and. Raja Rao (b. 1908). All three began writing in the nineteen thirties and all three have seen the turn of the century. Their influence or their importance in the world of the Indian English novel cannot be measured. With, 411and's Untouchable, Narayan's Swami and Friends, and Rao's *Kanthapura*, the Indian English novel found its place in the gamut of Indian literatures. In the later part of the 20th century,

21st Century Indian English Novel

The Indian novel has been a vibrant and energetic expressive space in the 21st century. While the grand postcolonial gestures characteristic of the late-20th-century Indian novel have been in evidence in new novels by established authors such as Vikram Chandra, Amitav Ghosh, and Salman Rushdie, a slate of new authors has emerged in this period aswell, charting a range of new novelistic modes. Some of these authors are Kiran Desai,Aravind Adiga, Githa Hariharan, Samina Ali, Karan Mahajan, and Amitava Kumar. Ingeneral, there has been a move away from ambitious literary fiction in the form of the" huge, baggy monster" that led to the publication of several monumental postcolonial novels in the 1980s and 1990s; increasingly the most dynamic and influential Indian writing uses new novelistic forms and literary styles tied to the changing landscape of India's current contemporary social and political

problems. The newer generation of authors has also eschewed the aspiration to represent the entirety of life in modern India, and instead aimed to explore much more limited regional and cultural narrative frameworks. If a novel like Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981) took its protagonist allover the Indian subcontinent and indexed a large number of important historical controversies in the interest of broad representation, Padma Viswnanathan's *The Toss of a Lemon* (2008) limits itself to a focus on a single Tamil Brahmin family's orientation toissues of caste and gender, and remains effectively local to Tamil Nadu. like Vikram Chandra, Amitav Ghosh, and Salman Rushdie, a slate of new authors has emerged in this period as well, charting out a range of new novelistic modes. In general, there has been a move away from ambitious literary fiction in the form of the "huge, baggy monster" that led to the publication of several monumental postcolonial novels in the 1980s and 1990s (*Rushdie's Midnight's Children* (1981), Vikram Seth's A Suitable Boy[1993], and Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance* (1995) being three cases in point). Such novels are still being published—two noteworthy examples might be Chandra's *Sacred Games* (2006), and Ghosh's Ibis Trilogy (2008–2015)—but increasingly the most dynamic and influential Indian writing is exploring new novelistic forms and literary styles. Amit Chaudhari once described the "large, postmodernist Indian English novel" as pursuing a"mimesis of form, where the largeness of the book allegorizes the largeness of the country it represents." Another version of this idea might be Fredric Jameson's much debated "national allegory" concept. Admittedly, not all Indian novelists writing in English even in the 1980s and 1990s aspired toward the baggy nationalist allegory; Chaudhuri himself is a case in point. Still, in the most exciting new Indian fiction published since 2000, the newer generation of authors has eschewed the aspiration tore present the entirety of life in modern India, and instead aimed to explore much more limited regional and cultural narrative frameworks. There is no central agenda ordefining idiom of this emerging literary culture—and that is in some ways the point—though three major groupings take up some of the major themes of Indian literature ofthe early 21st century: "New Urban Realism," "Gender and Religion," and "Globalizing India, Rein scribing the Past." To be clear, these are loose groupings introduced that help describe some important new trends in Indian fiction. In actuality, most texts have elements of more than one of these thematic areas, with some (for instance, Arun Indian novel in English acquired worldwide renown with the rise of award winning novelist like

Aurandhati Roy, V.S. Naipaul and others. Vikas Swarup is one the leading novelists of the contemporary period with his three widely popular novels: *Q&A (2005), Six Suspects(2008),The Accidental Apprentice(2013).* These novels have also been adapted in cinematic media and have thus proved to be a major force in the entertainment industry. Auradhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* straddling all three.

Vikas Swarup : A brief biography

Vikas Swarup was born in Allahabad (India) in a family of lawyers. After his schooling, Vikas attended Allahabad University and studied History, Psychology and Philosophy. He also made his mark as a champion debater, winning National level competitions. After graduating with distinction, he joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1986, motivated by an in interest in international relations and a desire to explore different cultures. In his diplomatic career, Vikas has been posted to various countries such as Turkey (1987-1990), the United States (1993-1997) Ethiopia (1997-2000), the United Kingdom (2000-2003) and south Africa (2006-2009). He serverd as Consul General of India in Osaka-Kobe, Japan from 2009 to 2013. After serving as the official spokesperson of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi (2015-2017) he was appointed India's High Commissioner to Canada, a post he has occupied since February 28, 2017.

He penned his first novel, *Q&A*, in two months, when he was posted in London. Published in 2005 by Doubleday/Random House (UK& Commonwealth), Harper Collins (Canada) and Scribner (US) it has been published in 43 languages. Vikas swarup has participated in literary festivals and book fairs around the world including the Oxford Literary Festival, the Turin Internationl Book Fair, the Auckland writers' conference, the Sydney writers' Festival, the Kitab Festival in New Delhi etc. he has written for TIME, Newsweek, The Guardian, The Telegraph (UK), the financial Times (UK), DNA (India), Outlook (India) and Liberation (France). Apart from reading, Vikas enjoys listening to music and playing cricket, tennins and table tennis. His wife Aparna is an artist who held exhibitions in India and abroad. They have two sons Aditya and Varun. Vikas Swarup is one of the most leading writers in Indian canvas. He has won critical acclaim with the novels namely *Q&A*, *Six Suspects,* and *The Accidental Apprentice*.

Review of Literature:

Vikas Swarup has written three novels:

***Q&A* (2005)**

The novel tell the story of Ram Mohammad Thomas, who is the most multi-colored protagonist created by contemporary Indian writers, writing in English and writing about modern India. An orphan who by birth has been freed from the shackles of the influence of a single religion / culture ends up being thrown around into all kinds of situations and circumstances. Vikas Swarup's spectacular debut novel opens in a jail cell in Mumbai, India, where Ram Mohammad Thomas is being held after correctly answering all twelve questions on India's biggest quiz show, Who Will Win a Billion? It is hard to believe that a poor orphan who has never read a newspaper or gone to school could win such a contest but through a series of exhilarating tales Ram explains to his lawyer how episodes in his life gave him the answer to each question. Ram takes us on an amazing review of his own history from the day he was found as a baby in the clothes donation box of a Delhi church to his employment by a faded Bollywood star to his adventure with security crazed Australian army colonel to his career as an overly creative tour guide at the Taj Mahal. Swarup's *Q&A* is a beguiling blend of high comedy, drama and romance that reveals how we know what we know not just about trivia, but about life itself. Cutting across humanity in all its squalor and glory, Vikas Swarup presents a kaleidoscopic vision of the struggle between good and evil and what happens when one boy has no other choice in life but survive.

***Six Suspects* (2008)**

This novel begins seven years ago in time when Vivek "Vicky" Rai, the playboy son of the Home Minister of Uttar Pradesh, is murdered bartender Ruby Gill at a trendy restaurant in New Delhi, simply because she refused to serve him a drink. Now Vicky Rai has been killed at the party he was throwing to celebrate his acquittal. The police recover six guests with guns in their possession: a corrupt bureaucrat who claims to have become Mahatma Gandhi; an American tourist infatuated with an Indian actress; a stone age tribesman on a quest to recover a sacred stone; a Bollywood sex symbol with a guilty secret; a

mobile-phone thief who dreams big; and an ambitious politician prepared to stoop low. This is Vikas Swarup's eagerly awaited second offering as fiction at its best. Swarup unravels the lives and motives of the six suspects, offering both a riveting page – turner and an insightful peek into the heart of contemporary India. Audaciously and astutely potted, with a panoramic imaginative sweep. *Six Suspects* is the work of master storyteller.

The Accidental Apprentice **(2013)**

The Accidental Apprentice is about a shop assistant, Sapna Sinha, who is invited to become CEO of a business empire if she can pass a series of seven tests. The story explores various forms of corruption in modern India

The premise of the plot is inspired by the reality television show *The Apprentice*.Sapna Sinha works in an electronics store in downtown Delhi. She hates her job, but she is ambitious and determined to succeed, because she knows that her family's fate is dependent on the money she brings in. One day, as she leaves the shop for her lunchbreak, she is approached by a man, Vinay Mohan Acharya, who claims to be the CEO of one of India's biggest companies. He tells her he is looking for someone to take on his business empire, and has decided it should be her. But in order to become the heir of his empire, Sapna must pass seven tests from the "Textbook of Life".

The seven tests are seven unexpected and life threatening situations with each test revealing a different quality of a leader. Sapna passes six of the seven tests with great difficulty. Though Vinay praises her for her character, Sapna is outraged at Vinay's indifference to the threat which posed to life. Each situation explores a facet of corruption in India. So far, Sapna learns the qualities of leadership, integrity, courage, foresight, resourcefulness and decisiveness, with Acharya keeping tabs on her and explaining the relevance of each quality.

As the story progresses, it is revealed that Acharya is facing bitter rivalry from his volatile and aggressive twin brother, AK Acharya. His company is engaging in insider trading and Acharya himself is not keeping well. Acharya hints that the seventh and final test would be the hardest of all. However, as Sapna

proceeds against the final task, the seventh test horribly spirals out of control. Vinay is found murdered mysteriously and Sapna is framed for the murder. Sapna escapes from jail and she discovers, to her horror, that her past had come to haunt her. Sapna uses all her wits to escape from the escalating situation and finally all is well.In the end, AK takes over Vinay's company and feels remorseful for holding a grudge against his brother. He speaks to Sapna and gives her a letter written by Vinay long ago. The letter reveals the truth why Vinay had chosen Sapna as his successor and tells her the final lesson he intended to impart: Wisdom. AK explains Sapna his brother's intentions, clearing her doubts.AK promises help to Sapna and asks her to take over as the CEO of Vinay's company. Sapna turns it down, saying that she intends to follow her heart, and AK agrees with her.Vikas Swrup has written a compelling, suspenseful tale about the lure of money and the power of dreams.

Apart from some newspaper reviews of Swarup's novels, no book length study has taken note of Vikas Swarup's literary contribution. Hence there is paucity of secondary sources on the author.

Technical aspects of the novel as a form of Literature

When a novel is studied critically, the following aspects are taken into consideration:

Plot

The plot is the artistic and systematic arrangement of the elements of a story. The writer has to choose the sequence of the arrangement of the story elements he wishes to tell. This selection depends upon the kind of story he wants to write. There are two types of plots a simple plot and a complex plot. When there is only one story with a beginning, middle and end, it is a simple plot. When there are other stories implanted in the main story, it is known as a complex plot.

Characterisation

The craft of the writer lies in the art of characterization. A writer has to represent characters in terms of age, sex, physic, social, economic and cultural set up, status and the various systems of belief and ideologies.

Setting or Locale

Characters in a story do not exist in vacuum. They have to be placed in some geographical location. They also have to be placed in some social, cultural or political set up.

Point of View

A story or tale is told or narrated by some narrator. the narrator uses the first person pronoun 'I' to narrate the tale. This is known as the first person narration or the first person point of view. When the narrator is not one of the characters of the story and narrates the events as a third person observes or narrator, it is known as the third person narration or the third person point of view.

Linguistic devices

Like poetry, prose fiction deploys various linguistic devices for aesthetic and communicative purposes. The figures of speech like irony, paradox, oxymoron, personification, simile, metaphor, symbols and archetypes are used to enhance the effect of the narrative.

Types of Prose Fiction

Autobiographical Novel, Bildungsroman, Campus Novel, Epistolary Novel, Gothic Fiction, Historical Novel, Magic Realism, Naturalistic Novel, Novella, Picaresque Novel, Science fiction, sentimental novel, stream of consciousness novel. Swarup's novels can be categorized in the genre of 'thrillers'. However, the basic elements of the novel form will have to be taken into consideration for the detailed analysis.

Objectives:-

1. To carry out a close reading of the primary text (three novels by Vikas Swarup) in order to identify the structural and thematic elements in them.
2. To discuss the major thematic concern of the text with relevance to the prevailing socio-political milieu in India.

3. To place the novels of Vikas Swarup in the great tradition of the Indian novel by identifying the conventional and distinctive elements in them.
4. To critically evaluate Vikas Swarup's contribution to the contemporary Indian novel in English

Significance:-

So far Vikas Swarup's novels have not formed the subject of a separate detailed story. These novels, by their sheer popularity among the readers, and a wider outreach through adaptions have gained a remarkable place in the contemporary Indian Literary Tradition. Hence it is necessary to evaluate the literary contribution made by Vikas Swarup to the field of the contemporary Indian novel in English.

Hypothesis:-

A careful textual analysis of Vikas Swarup's novel will reveal the elements of literary appeal and their relevance to the current Indian socio-political milieu.

Methodology

The proposed research requires to be mainly a library research. The MLA style (9^{th} edition) would be followed. Internet resources will be exhaustively used for evaluating the reader response to these literary texts. The theoretical framework will be taken from major theories of the novel by eminent critics. An interview with the author will also be conducted if possible.

Plan of the thesis:

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Chapter 2 – Q & A

Chapter 3 – The Six Suspects

Chapter 4 – The Accidental Apprentice

Chapter 5 - Conclusion

Bibliography:-

Primary Sources:

Swarup,Vikas.*Six Suspects*.Transworld Publication,2008.

----------.*Q&A*.Transworld Publication,2006.

----------.*The Accidental Apprentice*.Minotaur Book Publication,2013.

Secondary Sources:-

Auddy, Ranjan Kumar. "In Search of Indian English: History,Politics and Indigenisation. London & New York: Routledge, 2020 ISBN 978-0-367-51008-4 & 978-0-367-35271 & 978-0-429-33160-2

Haq, Kaiser (ed.). *Contemporary Indian Poetry*.Columbus: Ohio State University Press,1990.

Haq, Rubana (ed.). *The Golden Treasury of Writers Workshop Poetry*. Kolkata: Writers Workshop, 2008.

Hoskote, Ranjit (ed.*). Reasons for Belonging: Fourteen Contemporary Indian Poets*. Viking/Penguin Books India, New Delhi, 2002.

Singh, Bijender. "Indian Writing in English: Critical Insights." New Delhi, Authorspress, 2014.

Indian Writing in English | Men and Dreams in the Dhauladhar by Novels by Indian Authors - Kochery C Shibu

Joseph, Margaret Paul. "Jasmine on a String: a Survey of Women Writing English Fiction in India." Oxford University Press, 2014.

King, Bruce Alvin. *Modern Indian Poetry in English*: Revised Edition. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987, rev. 2001. ("the standard work on the subject and unlikely to be surpassed" — Mehrotra, 2003).

King, Bruce Alvin. Three Indian Poets: Nissim Ezekiel, A K Ramanujan, Dom Moraes. Madras: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Mehrotra, Arvind Krishna (ed.*). The Oxford India Anthology of Twelve Modern Indian Poets*. Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Mehrotra, Arvind Krishna (ed.). *A History of Indian Literature in English*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003. Distributed in India by Doaba Books Shanti Mohan House 16, Ansari Road, New Delhi.

Parthasarathy, R. (ed.). *en TwentTieth-Century Indian Poets* (New Poetry in India). New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1976.

Prem, PCK. *English Poetry in India: A Comprehensive Survey of Trends and Thought Patterns New* Delhi: Authorspress, 2011.ASIN 8172736029

Reddy, T. Vasudeva. *A Critical Survey of Indo-English Poetry* New Delhi: Authorspress, 2016.ASIN 9352072499

Roy, Pinaki. "Encountering the West: A Very Brief Overview of the Indian Diasporic Novelists". Journal of Higher Education and Research Society (ISSN 2321-9432) 1(1), October 2013: http://herso.org/vol-1-issue-1-oct-2013/

Roy, Pinaki. “Dramatic Chronicle: A Very Brief Review of the Growth of Indian English Plays”. *Indian Drama in English: Some Perspectives.* Ed. Kaushik, A.S. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors Pvt. Ltd., 2013 (ISBN 978-81-269-1772-3). pp. 272–87.

Sadana, Rashmi. "Writing in English," in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Indian Culture.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Sadana, Rashmi. English Heart, Hindi Heartland: the Political Life of Literature in India. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012.

Shivdasani, Menka (ed.). Anthology of Contemporary Indian Poetry : USA, BigBridge.Org, Michael Rothenberg, 2004.

Srikanth, Rajini. *The World Next Door:* South Asian American Literature and the Idea of America'. Asian American History and Culture. Philadelphia: Temple UP, 2004.

Mahapatra, Jayanta & Sharma, *Yuyutsu* (ed.). Ten: The New Indian Poets. New Delhi: Nirala Publications, 1993. http://niralapublications.com/new-release-ten-the-new-indian-poets/

Jha, Vivekananad. (ed) *The Dance of the Peacock*. Canada: Hidden Brook Press, 2014.

Web Resources:-

www.wikipedia.com

www.gradesaver.com

www.bookbrowse.com

www.goodread.com

www.vikasswarup.net

www.thinkerreviews.com

Researcher

Mr. Hadoltikar Vaibhav Sunil
A/P. Hadolti
Tq.Ahmedpur, Dist.Latur
(MS) – 413515

Research Supervisor

Dr. Mahesh M. Nivargi
Professor, Dept.of English
Mahatma Gandhi Mahavidyalaya,
Ahmedpur, Dist.Latur (MS) – 413515